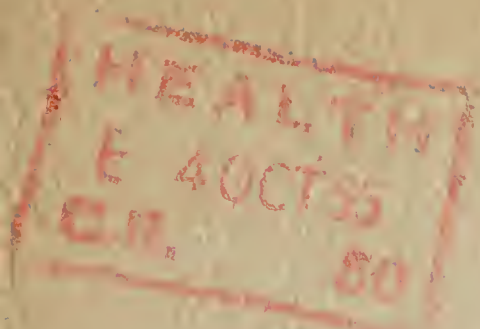


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Prudhoe Urban District Council.

County of Northumberland.



# ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER

OF HEALTH

AND

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

For the Year 1954.



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## Health Committee.

—O—

*Chairman :* Councillor H. PEART, O.B.E., J.P.

*Members :* Councillors J. W. BEWICK.  
Mrs. P. GRANGE.  
F. O. T. HUDSPITH.  
J. RIDLEY.  
Ald. Rev. R. E. ROBSON, J.P.  
S. RUTHEFORD.  
S. SIMPSON.  
J. L. STOKOE.

—O—

### OFFICERS OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH :  
MADGE HOPPER, M.B., B.S., B.HY., D.P.H.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR :  
W. G. TWEDDLE, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., A.M.I.S.E.

CLERK AND SHORTHAND-TYPIST : Miss J. GRAY.

# ANNUAL REPORT

## OF THE

### MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

#### For the Year ended 31st December, 1954.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Prudhoe Urban District Council :*

LADY AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting the Annual Report upon the vital statistics and health of the district for the year ended 31st December, 1954.

### I.—Vital Statistics and Social Conditions of the District.

Area (in Acres)	..	..	..	..	3,889
Population (Registrar General's estimated mid-year Home Population)	..	..	..	..	9,750
Inhabited Houses	..	..	..	..	2,740

The main occupations in the district are Coal Mining and Chemical Works.

The district consists of the following Parishes :—

Prudhoe ..	..	..	..	..	1,457 acres.
Prudhoe Castle	..	..	..	..	645 acres.
Eltringham	..	..	..	..	356 acres.
Mickley ..	..	..	..	..	1,431 acres.

### POPULATION.

There was an increase of 69 in the Registrar General's estimate of the total population from 9,681 in 1953 to 9,750 in 1954. The population of the urban district has shown a gradual rise during the last ten years from 9,046 in 1945 to the present figure.

### BIRTHS.

				Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate	..	..	..	60	53	113
Illegitimate	..	..	..	4	1	5
				64	54	118

The total number of live births during the year was 118, compared with 148 in 1953 and 132 in 1952. The birth rate (corrected for age and sex distribution) per 1,000 of the population was 11.25 in 1954 ; that for England and Wales in the same year was 15.2.

There was a marked decline in the birth rate of the urban district in 1954, greater than the very slight decrease in the birth rate of the country generally.

The number of illegitimate births in 1954 increased to five from three, in 1953.



In 1954, there were four still births, whereas in 1953 there were two. The still birth rate for the district was 32.7 per 1,000 live and still births compared with the rate of 23.4 for England and Wales.

The still birth rate for the district in 1953 was 13.3 per 1,000 live and still births and that for the country generally 22.5.

This rise in the number of still births in 1954 more than doubled the rate for the district as found in 1953, and the 1954 rate was above that of the country generally. The rise in the number of still births, though only two, and the decrease in the total number of births increased the rate to this extent.

Still Births.				Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate	..	..	..	1	3	4
Illegitimate	..	..	..	—	—	—
				1	3	4

### DEATHS.

The total number of deaths during the year was 107, of which 24 occurred at the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital. During the previous year, the total number of deaths was 105, of which 16 occurred at the Hospital.

The death rate for the urban district (corrected for age and sex distribution) was 13.08 per 1,000 population. The corresponding rate for England and Wales was 11.3 per 1,000 population.

If the Hospital deaths were excluded, the death rate for residents of the district (corrected for age and sex distribution) was 10.2 per 1,000 population. Again excluding the Hospital deaths in 1954, the total number of deaths of residents was 83 ; in 1953, the corresponding figure was 89.

### Natural Increase of Population.

The number of births in excess of deaths (other than the non-transferable hospital ones) was 35 in 1954. In 1953, it was 59, in 1952, 41. This natural increase of births over deaths is gradually decreasing both locally and nationally. The national figures were 171,334 excess of births over deaths in 1954. The average excess of births over deaths for the years 1948/1952 was 203,016.

### Infant Mortality.

There were two deaths of infants under one year of age during the year, compared with one in 1953 and four in 1952.

This gives an infant mortality rate of 16.9 per 1,000 live births compared with the rate of 25.5 per 1,000 births for the country generally.

The infant mortality rate for the district is thus for the second time well below that of England and Wales though slightly higher than the rate for the district the previous year.

On perusal of the comparative table of birth and death rates, the dramatic fall in the rate during the last few years is very evident.

The increasing advance of the antibiotics has almost virtually stamped out the infective causes of infant deaths and the core of prematurity and congenital defects remain to be tackled by ante-natal care and research. This is likely to be a much more gradual process.

One of the deaths of infants under one year occurred during the first month of life as did the one infant death in 1953.

### Maternal Mortality.

One death from maternal causes was registered in 1954 as in 1953. Previous to 1953, no deaths under this heading had been registered for five years.

The maternal mortality rate for the district was 8.2 per 1,000 total live and still births and that for the country as a whole was 0.69 per 1,000 total live and still births.

### Individual Causes of Death.

					Male.	Female.
Tuberculosis, respiratory	..	..	..	..	1 (1)	—
Tuberculosis, other	..	..	..	..	—	—
Syphilitic disease	..	..	..	..	—	—
Diphtheria	..	..	..	..	—	—
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	1	—
Meningococcal infections	..	..	..	..	—	1
Acute poliomyelitis	..	..	..	..	—	—
Measles	..	..	..	..	—	—
Other infective and parasitic diseases	..	..	..	..	2 (2)	1
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	..	..	..	..	1	1 (1)
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	..	..	..	..	1	—
Malignant neoplasm, breast	..	..	..	..	—	2
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	..	..	..	..	—	1
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	..	..	..	..	8 (1)	6
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	..	..	..	..	1	—
Diabetes	..	..	..	..	—	—
Vascular lesions of nervous system	..	..	..	..	9 (4)	8 (1)
Coronary disease, angina	..	..	..	..	8 (2)	10 (3)
Hypertension with heart disease	..	..	..	..	—	—
Other heart disease	..	..	..	..	8	6
Other circulatory disease	..	..	..	..	2	1
Influenza	..	..	..	..	—	—
Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	4 (4)	2 (2)
Bronchitis	..	..	..	..	—	—
Other diseases of respiratory system	..	..	..	..	—	—
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	..	..	..	..	—	—
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	..	..	..	..	—	—
Nephritis and nephrosis	..	..	..	..	—	1
Hyperplasia of prostate	..	..	..	..	1	—
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	..	..	..	..	—	1
Congenital malformations	..	..	..	..	—	1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	..	..	..	..	11 (2)	5 (1)
Motor vehicle accidents	..	..	..	..	1	—
All other accidents	..	..	..	..	—	—
Suicide	..	..	..	..	—	1
Homicide and operations of war	..	..	..	..	—	—
					59 (16)	48 (8)

*Figures in brackets denote Hospital deaths.*

There was a slight decrease in the number of deaths classified as due to "Heart and Circulatory Diseases," from 34 in 1953 to 30, in 1954. In addition, five deaths in this group of diseases occurred at the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital in both years.

Deaths from "Vascular lesions of the nervous system" rose to 17 in 1954 from 10 in 1953, the rise being mainly due to five Hospital deaths.

Deaths classified as due to " Malignant Neoplasm " showed a slight increase to a total of 20 in 1954 from 15 in 1953. Two of these deaths occurred at the Hospital.

In both years, deaths from malignant neoplasm of the stomach, lungs, breast and uterus were fairly constant, but those from malignant neoplasm of other sites rose by five in 1954.

There was a very welcome fall in the number of deaths classified as primarily due to respiratory diseases (other than tuberculosis) to a total of six in 1954 from 12 in 1953. The six deaths in 1954 and five of the 12 deaths in 1953 occurred at the Hospital.

When one takes into consideration that in 1952 there were nine deaths in the urban district and at that time Hospital deaths were transferable so that these deaths were entirely of residents, the figure for 1954 stands out more clearly.

No death from Influenza was registered in 1954, whereas there was one death the previous year.

There was no death registered from " Ulcer of stomach and duodenum," or from "Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea" in 1954. In 1953, two deaths in the former class and one in the latter class were registered.

In both years, there was one death due to a " Motor vehicle accident."

It is pleasing to report that deaths from " All other accidents " showed a sharp fall to none in 1954 compared with four in 1953.

One death from " Suicide " occurred in both 1954 and 1953. Unfortunately, one death took place in a young child just over one year of age from Whooping Cough and one of a baby of two months from Meningococcal infections.

#### INFANT MORTALITY.

Extreme prematurity .. .. .	Male ..	1 hour.
Meningococcal septicaemia .. ..	Female ..	2 months.
Total ..		2 deaths

**TABLE OF DEATH AND BIRTH RATES  
COMPARED WITH ENGLAND AND WALES.**

Year	General Death Rate per 1,000 Population		Infant Mortality Rate		Birth Rate per 1,000 Population	
	Prudhoe	England & Wales	Prudhoe	England & Wales	Prudhoe	England & Wales
1945	8.9	11.4	67.6	46.0	15.3	16.10
1946	10.16	11.5	60.8	43.0	15.8	19.1
1947	10.1	12.0	60.24	41.0	17.95	20.5
1948	9.2	10.8	51.7	34.0	18.73	17.9
1949	9.5	11.7	52.9	32.0	16.16	16.7
1950	10.2	11.6	51.8	29.8	14.23	15.8
1951	9.2	12.5	47.6	29.6	13.3	15.5
1952	9.6	11.3	30.3	27.6	14.05	15.3
1953	12.5	11.4	6.7	26.8	14.67	15.5
1954	13.08	11.3	16.9	25.5	11.25	15.2



## II.—Tuberculosis.

There was one death from respiratory tuberculosis in 1954 which occurred at the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital so that virtually there were no deaths from this cause among residents of the district. This compares favourably with the figures for previous years. In 1953, there was one death of a resident from pulmonary tuberculosis and in both 1952 and 1951 there were two deaths of residents from this cause in each year.

No deaths from the non-pulmonary form of this disease occurred in 1954 ; in 1953, there was one Hospital death and one death of a resident in both 1952 and 1951.

The death rate for tuberculosis (all forms) for the urban district (which comprises the one Hospital death) was .102 per 1,000 population. The rate for England and Wales in 1954 was .179 per 1,000 population. Although the mortality for this disease has certainly dropped throughout the country, the incidence shows an apparent increase which may be due in large part to earlier and improved methods of diagnosis.

During 1954, 19 new notifications of pulmonary tuberculosis, 15 male and 4 female, were received. In 1953, there were 12 new notifications of pulmonary tuberculosis. Of the 19 new notifications in 1954, four (3 male and 1 female) occurred among patients or staff at the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital. This reduces the number of new notifications of residents to 15, an increase of three in the number notified during the preceding year.

The increase was chiefly among males, there being ten more cases of residents notified during 1954 than in 1953 and was in the adult age groups, 15 to 25 years and also in the later age groups up to 45 years.

On the other hand, there was a considerable decrease in the number of new notifications of females suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis during the year ; a decrease of seven in the two years. This was chiefly in the adult age groups, 25 to 45 years.

During 1954, therefore, the general incidence of pulmonary tuberculosis showed a slight rise and a considerable swing from females to males in the adult age groups of 25 to 45 years.

Notifications of the non-pulmonary forms of the disease increased to 3 (all male) in 1954 from no case notified during 1953, 2, in 1952 and 5, in 1951. One of the new notifications was in respect of a patient at the Hospital.

The following table gives the state of the tuberculosis register at the 31st December, 1954, and the previous seven years :—

	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
31st December, 1947	13	13	11	16	53
31st December, 1948	16	8	8	10	42
31st December, 1949	15	8	9	8	40
31st December, 1950	20	14	9	9	52
31st December, 1951	21	17	12	10	60
31st December, 1952	20	18	11	11	60
31st December, 1953	18	22	6	4	50
31st December, 1954	33	26	9	4	72



The register at the 31st December, 1954, showed 72 cases made up as follows :—

		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 1 year	..	—	—	—	—
1—5 years	..	—	—	—	—
5—15 „	..	2	—	2	1
15—25 „	..	10	10	5	—
25—35 „	..	12	10	2	1
35—45 „	..	3	4	—	1
45—55 „	..	6	2	—	1
55—65 „	..	—	—	—	—
65 and over	..	—	—	—	—
		33	26	9	4

#### Classification of New Cases notified in 1954.

		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 1 year	..	—	—	—	—
1—5 years	..	—	—	—	—
5—15 „	..	—	—	2 (1)	—
15—25 „	..	6	3	1	—
25—35 „	..	3 (1)	1 (1)	—	—
35—45 „	..	3 (2)	—	—	—
45 and over	..	3	—	—	—
		15 (3)	4 (1)	3 (1)	—

*Figures in brackets denote Hospital cases.*

#### MASS RADIOGRAPHY.

Three visits were paid during the year by the No. 2 Unit of the Regional Hospital Board. The first two visits were to industry in the district and the third visit on 8th December to the general public, operating from the Gospel Mission Hall.

At these visits a total of 1,268 examinees attended (769 males, 499 females), 38 were referred for large films and of these, eight were subsequently sent to the chest clinic. Three cases of active disease, all males, were discovered showing a percentage of 0.23. In addition, several visits were made to the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital for the surveying of patients and staff.

These figures have kindly been supplied by Dr. Reginald Beal of the Newcastle upon Tyne Regional Hospital Board.

### III.—General Epidemiology.

The notifications of acute infectious diseases are set out in a separate table in the report.

The total number of infectious diseases notified during 1954 was 188 compared with a total of 194 in 1953, and 213 in 1952.

#### **Whooping Cough.**

1954 showed the greatest incidence of Whooping Cough seen in the district for some years. During the year, 114 cases were notified compared with 14 cases notified in 1953 and 51, in 1952.

The peak of the outbreak was in July when 40 cases were notified.

In June, 22 cases were notified and 14 in August.

There were several cases of a more severe type and one baby of just over twelve months died of Whooping Cough as a contributory cause. A few more children were protected with Whooping Cough vaccine than in former years. These injections are given at the Child Welfare Clinic or by the general practitioners at the parents request but not yet on the same basis as immunisation against Diphtheria, pending further trial.

#### **Dysentery.**

47 notifications of Dysentery were received during the year, 20 cases of Sonne and 27 of Flexner Dysentery. All the cases of Flexner Dysentery and seven of the cases of Sonne Dysentery were at the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital, mainly in the months of May and June. In the latter months of the year, the cases dropped to an occasional single one, which, bearing in mind the difficulty of eradicating such a disease from this particular type of patient, reflects credit on the measures taken.

The other 13 cases of Sonne Dysentery occurred in six families in the district. Two cases in one family were notified in August and an isolated case in October. The remaining ten cases involved four families and were notified in November. Routine investigation of all cases and family contacts was carried out, cases and positive excretors received treatment from their family doctor until clear. No further cases occurred.

#### **Scarlet Fever.**

16 cases of Scarlet Fever were notified in 1954, compared with 15 cases in 1953 and four in 1952. All were of a mild type.

#### **Diphtheria.**

No case of Diphtheria was notified for the seventh year in succession.

#### **Measles.**

One case only of Measles was notified during the year in great contrast to the previous year when 137 cases occurred. 1952 was obviously the year of biennial increase.

#### **Poliomyelitis.**

No case of Poliomyelitis was notified during the year. During the last four years, one case only was notified in 1952.

#### **Food Poisoning.**

During the year six cases of Food Poisoning were notified. This compared unfavourably with previous years as none were notified in either 1953 or in 1952. All the cases occurred in the third quarter of the year.

Four of the cases occurred in one household at the end of August and during early September and were found to be due to *Salmonella*

Typhi-murium. On investigation, a link between these cases and a small outbreak which included one fatal case some thirty miles distant was traceable. One child of the family in this district was admitted to the Isolation Hospital at Walkergate, Newcastle upon Tyne.

The clinical illness of this family cleared up quickly on treatment but it was some time before the stools were entirely cleared.

Two other cases of Food Poisoning occurred one in July and one in August. On investigation no causal organism was isolated from suspected food or specimen from the patients.

No further cases occurred.

### FOOD POISONING.

Food Poisoning Notifications (Corrected)

Returned to Registrar General.

1ST QUARTER.	2ND QUARTER.	3RD QUARTER.	4TH QUARTER.	TOTAL.
Nil.	Nil.	6	Nil.	6

#### OUTBREAKS DUE TO IDENTIFIED AGENTS.

Total outbreaks	..	1	Total cases	..	4
-----------------	----	---	-------------	----	---

Outbreaks due to :—

(a) Chemical Poisons	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
(b) Salmonella Organisms : (Typhi-murium)	..	..	..	..	..	1
(c) Staphylococci (including toxin)	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
(d) Cl. botulinum	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
(e) Other bacteria	..	..	..	..	..	Nil

#### OUTBREAKS OF UNDISCOVERED CAUSE.

Total outbreaks	..	Nil	Total cases	..	Nil
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#### SINGLE CASES.

Agent identified	—	Unknown cause	2	Total	..	2
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### NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Smallpox	..	..	..	..	..	—
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	..	..	16
Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	..	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	..	..	..	..	..	1
Diphtheria	..	..	..	..	..	—
Erysipelas	..	..	..	..	..	2
Measles	..	..	..	..	..	1
Dysentery	..	..	..	..	..	47
Malaria	..	..	..	..	..	—
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	..	..	..	..	..	—
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	..	114
Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	..	..	..	..	..	—
Poliomyelitis (Non-Paralytic)	..	..	..	..	..	—
						182

### LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The examination of faeces, sputum, swabs, milk, water and ice cream was carried out at the Public Health Laboratory, General Hospital, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne.



### Bacteriological Reports.

				Results		
				Positive	Negative	Total
Faeces	..	..	..	31	83	114
Sputum	..	..	..	1	3	4
Throat swabs	..	..	—		9	9
Vaginal swabs	..	..	—		3	3
				32	98	130

## IV.—National Assistance Act, 1948.

### Section 47.—Removal to suitable premises of persons living in insanitary conditions and in need of care and attention.

Several visits were made to elderly persons under this section but in no case was formal action required.

Home Helps were provided where this was found to be necessary.

### Section 50.—Burial of the Dead.

The provisions of this section were carried out by the Council in one case.

## V.—Housing.

During 1954, no houses were completed by the Council but roads and sewers to serve 105 houses at West Wylam were finished.

Six single bedroom bungalows were also being built at Drawback, and preparations made at Mickley Square to build a further nine bungalows of a similar type.

Eighteen private houses were built during the year.

In addition to Stage 1—West Wylam Scheme, it was hoped to commence work on Roads and Sewers in respect of Stage 2, this site being provided for 200 houses.

It will be seen, therefore, that the Council was making great efforts to deal with its housing problems. Preparatory work proceeded in respect of houses to be included in slum clearance schemes, and it was planned to remove families from Norman Street and Wilfred Street early in 1955 to new houses in Stage 1—West Wylam.

High priority to all cases of active Pulmonary Tuberculosis was given by the Council and this foresight should pay dividends in the years to come.

One house ceased to be occupied and was demolished under Section 11, Housing Act, 1936.

Information in tabular form required under Article 31 of the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925, is contained in the statistical section of the report.

## VI.—Water Supply.

The district is supplied by the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company. Eight houses were provided with internal water supplies during the year leaving a total of 52 houses with external supplies. Seven samples of water were taken at different points in the district and examined at the Public Health Laboratory, all were found to be completely satisfactory.

## VII.—Food Hygiene.

Posters were shown and leaflets distributed during the summer emphasising the importance of food hygiene. Opportunity during the visiting of food shops, of which there are 60 in the district, was taken to instruct food preparing staffs and food handlers and every endeavour was made to improve the general standard of food hygiene.

No formal action was necessary under the byelaws, made under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

## VIII.—Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

The details shown under this section have been compiled by Mr. W. G. Tweddle, Public Health Inspector.

## IX.—Provision of Health Services in the District by Other Authorities.

### (a) REGIONAL HOSPITAL BOARD.

#### 1. Hospitals.

In the district there is the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital for mental defectives under the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital Management Committee.

The Hexham and Newcastle groups of hospitals serve patients from this district.

Cases of infectious diseases are admitted when necessary to the Hospital for Infectious Diseases, Walkergate, Newcastle.

### (b) NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL.

(Services 3, 4, 5 6 and 7 and the care of the buildings under Service 2 are administered by the South Area Health Sub-Committee).

#### 1. Midwifery and Home Nursing Service.

These services are administered by the Northumberland County Council. There are three nurse/midwives in the Prudhoe Urban District Council's area, two working in Prudhoe and one in the Stocksfield and Mickley districts.

## 2. Maternity and Child Welfare.

CHILD WELFARE CENTRE, Council Yard, Prudhoe.

Sessions for babies, children, expectant mothers and dental treatment are held at the above centre.

*Children's Sessions :* Every Wednesday, 9-30 a.m. to 12 noon.

1-30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

*Ante-natal Sessions :* 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 1-30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

1st and 3rd Friday, 1-30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

In April, 1954, extensions to the existing building were commenced to provide a separate waiting room, office and increased accommodation for the dental department.

This work was completed in the early autumn.

## 3. Immunisation against Diphtheria.

At the 31st December, 1954, 88% of the total child population of the district had been immunised at sometime during their lives, compared with 88% in 1953 and 86% in 1952.

There was a rise in the percentage of immunised children under 5 years to 79 in 1954 from 65, in 1953. The percentage of immunised children of from 5—15 years remained at 98 in both years.

In the course of the year, 172 children received a primary course of immunisation (155 children under 5 years and 17 from 5—15 years) ; in addition, 170 children received a reinforcing injection.

### Immunity Index.

This Index which shows the number of children in each age group immunised during the last five years, was introduced by the Ministry of Health in 1953. For the urban district, the figures for that year were, under 1 year, 19% ; 1—4 years, 81%, 5—14 years, 63% ; giving a total of 66% of the child population (0—14 years) immunised during the last five years.

It is pleasing to report that for 1954, the Immunity Index has risen in all the three age groups, but considerably in the under 1 year group.

The figures were, 33% under 1 year ; 87%, 1—4 years ; 64% 5—14 years with the total of 69% of the child population (0—14 years) immunised during the last five years.

The main object of the campaign remains as before ; to secure immunisation of not less than 75% of babies before their first birthday and to see that an adequate level of immunisation is maintained, for only then can this country hope to be rid of diphtheria altogether.

The aim of getting every child immunised before the first birthday is still the primary concern of doctors, health visitors, district nurses and other health workers in the field, who continue to try to achieve this by personal persuasion aided by a background of publicity.



### **Whooping Cough Prophylaxis.**

During the year, a total of 15 children, 3 (under 1 year), 11 (1—4 years), 1 (5—14 years), received prophylaxis with pertussis vaccine. In 1953, four children only received prophylactic injections.

### **Vaccination against Smallpox.**

The number of vaccinations against Smallpox dropped considerably in 1954 to a total of only five primary vaccinations and one revaccination from 32 primary vaccinations and two revaccinations in 1953.

These figures are extremely low and leave the majority of the population at risk should a case arise, which, with increased travel generally, especially air travel, is quite possible.

### **4. Ambulance Service.**

The urban district is served directly by an ambulance and driver stationed at 4, High Row South, Mickley Square, Stocksfield. Telephone No. 3110 Stocksfield. In addition, ambulances are available from Throckley Station at Westway, Throckley. Telephone No. 7-4535 Lemington.

On 3rd October, 1954, control of ambulances by radio became operative throughout the South Area. The ambulance at Mickley was supplied with a mobile set and is in contact by radio with the Throckley Depot.

During the year, the Prudhoe Ambulance made 419 journeys, carried 3,086 patients, including 442 stretcher cases and 131 accident and emergency cases and had a total mileage of 23,543 miles.

These totals show a slight decrease in the use of the service in 1954, compared with the previous year.

The number of journeys decreased by 69 and the number of patients carried by 161, but there were 32 additional stretcher cases and one additional accident case. The total mileage during the year dropped by 792 miles.

### **5.—Home Help Service.**

During 1954, 74 patients resident in the urban district were served with home helps for varying periods, a decrease of 15 cases on the previous year when 89 patients were served.

The cases include 14 of illness, 53 aged and infirm people, 2 confinements, 2 cases of tuberculosis, one case discharged from hospital and one blind and paralysed person respectively.

The number of aged and infirm people served decreased from 72 in 1953 to 53 in 1954.

### **6. Nursing Care Committees.**

There are two Nursing Care Committees in the district, one at Prudhoe and the other at Mickley.

These committees are voluntary organisations who visit sick people on occasions and supply articles of nursing equipment to them if required. The Honorary Secretaries of these committees are :—

Mr. B. NICHOLS, 27, High Row North, Mickley, Stocksfield.

Mrs. A. L. KNOX, 1, Grange Terrace, Prudhoe.

## 7. Care and After-Care.

Meetings of the Newburn and Prudhoe After-Care Sub-Committee were held at two-monthly intervals and aid to patients suffering from tuberculosis towards milk, clothing, travelling expenses of relatives to sanatoria, etc., were granted in suitable cases and an effort made to help in difficult circumstances.

One patient from Prudhoe was admitted to the British Legion Village, Papworth, for rehabilitation.

## Conclusion.

May I again express my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee of the Council for their interest and help ; to Mr. W. G. Tweddle, Public Health Inspector and Miss J. Gray, Clerk in the Health Department, for their sustained work during the year, also to other officials of the Council for their co-operation.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Lady and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

M. HOPPER,

Medical Officer of Health.

# ANNUAL REPORT

## OF THE

### PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

#### For the Year ended 31st December, 1954.

*To Dr. Madge Hopper.*

I herewith submit my Annual Report.

### Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

The following is a list of visits and inspections made during 1954 in respect of Public Health Acts, Housing Acts, Food and Drugs Acts, Factories Acts, Slaughter of Animals Acts, Water Act, Milk (Special Designations) Act and Prevention of Damage by Pests Act :—

Water Supply	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	34
Drainage	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	90
Stables and Piggeries	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Fried Fish Shops	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	31
Tenements	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	39
Tents, Vans and Sheds	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16
Factories and Outworkers	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	88
Bakehouses	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Public Conveniences	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	104
Places of Entertainment and Licensed Premises	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	43
Refuse Collection and Disposal	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	259
Rats and Mice	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	75
Atmospheric Pollution	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	31
Schools, Shops and Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	214
Public Health Acts	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	180
Housing Acts	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	74
Overcrowding	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	20
Filthy or Verminous Premises	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	27
Miscellaneous Housing Visits	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	64
Inquiries in cases of I.D.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	112
Disinfection, etc.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	18
Visits to Slaughterhouses, Butchers, Canteens, Dairies, Fish-mongers, Grocers, Greengrocers and Food Preparing Premises	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	298
Ice Cream Premises and Restaurants	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	35
Street Hawkers' Carts, etc.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	24
Miscellaneous Food Visits	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	66
								1,964

Number of Nuisances Found	..	..	..	107
„ „ Nuisances Abated	..	..	..	105
„ „ Verbal Notices Served	..	..	..	160
„ „ Verbal Notices Complied With	..	..	..	156
„ „ Informal Notices Served	..	..	..	165
„ „ Informal Notices Complied With	..	..	..	134
„ „ Statutory Notices Served	..	..	..	4
„ „ Statutory Notices Complied With	..	..	..	3



### Sanitary Administration.

The number of complaints made to the Health Department totalled 236 and in addition many verbal complaints received outside were dealt with.

### Schools.

There are six schools : Mickley, Eltringham, Low Prudhoe, West Prudhoe, East Prudhoe and Prudhoe R.C. All sanitary conveniences are situated in the school yards. Water is supplied by the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company. Additional W.C's. are to be provided at East Prudhoe C.P. School.

### Sewerage and Drainage.

MICKLEY SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS. These are old works and the sludge bed is in poor condition.

ELTRINGHAM SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS. Small works for sixty properties.

EASTWOODS SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS. Small works for twelve houses. In good order.

LOW PRUDHOE SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS. These are the main disposal works in the district. Additions are to be made to cope with the new village of West Wylam where it is planned to build over 600 houses.

### Public Health Act, 1936.

A further eighteen privies were removed during the year in the following localities :—

Keeper's Cott., Durham Riding	(1)	Middle Row	..	..	(3)			
Woodburn Terrace	..	..	(1)	West Road	..	..	(2)	
Beaumont Terrace	..	..	(1)	Edgewell House Farm	..	..	(1)	
Highfield Terrace	..	..	(1)	Castle Cottage	..	..	(1)	
Riding Terrace	..	..	(1)	Oakwell Terrace	..	..	(4)	
River View	..	..	..	(1)	Front Street	..	..	(1)

At the 31st December, 1954, the number of privies in use was 474 serving seven hundred houses.

The total number of houses in the district is 2,740 and the percentage of houses still using ash privies is 25.5. This percentage has fallen from 40.6 in 1946 and will fall at a faster rate when slum clearance removes many of the properties using privies.

Open ashpits are still in use at the undermentioned premises. Three were removed in 1954 leaving twenty.

Oak Street	..	..	..	(2)	Durham Riding Cottages..	(2)
Gordon Terrace		..	..	(3)	Eltringham Farm Cotts.	.. (1)
Drawback	..	..	..	(1)	High Mickley	.. .. (4)
Elm Street	..	..	..	(3)	Oakfield Terrace	.. (2)
Broomhouse Farm		..	..	(2)		

### Drainage Work.

A considerable length of drainage was examined and tested during the year especially on new buildings for the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital.

Number of lineal yards of drains laid	..	..	1,677
Number of inspection chambers provided	..	..	81

Insanitary gullies and traps were removed whenever possible and replaced with modern fittings to improve conditions.

**Public Conveniences.**

BRANCH END : For males and females.

PRUDHOE ROAD ENDS : For males and females.

The above premises were painted during the year and minor repairs carried out.

**Refuse Collection and Disposal. (House and Trade Refuse).**

This service has again been efficiently carried out using four Karrier Bantam Wagons. Nearly 3,000 premises are scavenged each week and every effort is made to maintain regular collections.

The ash content of the coal burned in this area is both high and heavy and from checks which have been taken an estimated tonnage of 120 tons is removed each week from a population of 9,750 persons.

The refuse collection service is also slowed up by the number of houses using ash privies—700. Since 1946, the number of houses scavenged has increased by over 500 and new estates have brought greater problems to the Cleansing Department, especially Oaklands with its 300 houses practically all of which have steps. These are difficult to negotiate in wintry weather and prevent the use of wheeled bin carriers.

It is also practically impossible to recruit younger men to this service and the average age of the present staff is 52 years.

One refuse wagon is kept in reserve for replacement as any delay in collection of three or four days due to breakdown causes a considerable build up of refuse in this district.

REGISTRATION NO.	YEAR PURCHASED	CAPACITY
JVK 199 .. ..	Feb., 1945 ..	7 cu. yds.
JVK 361 .. ..	Aug., 1945 ..	7 cu. yds.
KBB 118 .. ..	Mar., 1946 ..	7 cu. yds.
BJR 306 .. ..	Dec., 1946 ..	7 cu. yds.
ETY 298 .. ..	May, 1951 ..	7 cu. yds.

Refuse is disposed of by controlled tipping at West Wylam Tip and it is estimated that 6,000 tons are desposited annually.

The total cost of Refuse Collection and Disposal including labour, transport and purchase of vehicles over the past nine years has been as follows :—

YEAR	NET COST	RATE IN THE £ s. d.	PREMISES EMPLOYED
1946 .. ..	£5,082	2 9.8	2,360 12
1947 .. ..	£4,413	2 5.1	2,482 13
1948 .. ..	£4,368	2 3.7	2,590 13
1949 .. ..	£4,865	2 7.3	2,654 13
1950 .. ..	£5,027	2 7.1	2,722 12
1951 .. ..	£4,788	2 5.5	2,724 12
1952 .. ..	£6,089	3 1.2	2,747 12
1953 .. ..	£5,848	2 10.2	2,914 12
1954 .. ..	£6,497	2 11.5	2,955 13

The Refuse Tip at West Wylam is now completely fenced and provided with a gate.

### Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948.

The register at the end of 1954 showed the following types of premises :—

Garages	..	..	..	..	..	10
Joiners' and Builders' Premises	..	..	..	..	..	8
Bakeries	..	..	..	..	..	2
Boot Repairers	..	..	..	..	..	4
Sanitary Pipes and Brickworks	..	..	..	..	..	3
Blacksmiths' and Light Engineering	..	..	..	..	..	2
Battery Charging	..	..	..	..	..	4
Chemical Works	..	..	..	..	..	1
Sand and Gravel Extraction	..	..	..	..	..	2
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	20
						—
						56
						—

### FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

#### Inspections for Purposes of Provisions as to Health.

PREMISES	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	26	46	3	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ..	26	33	—	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (ex-cluding out-workers' premises) ..	4	8	1	—
TOTAL ..	56	87	4	—



## CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

PARTICULARS	Number of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M.I.	By H.M.I.	
Want of cleanliness .. ..	4	4	—	—	—
Overcrowding .. ..	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature ..	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation .. ..	1	1	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors ..	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences—					
(a) Insufficient .. ..	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ..	3	3	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes ..	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork) .. ..	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ..	8	8	—	—	—

## OUTWORK.

NATURE OF WORK	NO. OF OUT-WORKERS IN AUGUST
Wearing apparel (Making, etc.)	1

## Inspection of Meat and Other Foods.

There are no slaughterhouses in regular use in this district. All meat is brought into the area from Hexham and Newcastle and is supplied to six butchers' shops. Regular examination of butchers' premises has been maintained, special attention being paid to the preparation of sausages, potted meats and black and white puddings.

## FOOD INSPECTION.

UNSOUND FOOD	Surrendered
Beef .. ..	50 lbs.
Pork .. ..	177 lbs.
Canned Goods, etc. .. ..	283 contrs.
Sausages .. ..	11 lbs.
Cooked Ham (Tinned) .. ..	216 lbs.
Jellied Veal, Ox-Tongue and Corned Beef, etc. .. ..	247 lbs.
Sugar .. ..	224 lbs.
Raisins .. ..	30 lbs.
Bacon .. ..	5½ lbs.
Fish .. ..	2 lbs.

Unfit food has been disposed of by burying in the refuse tip, being covered with disinfectant beforehand, if thought necessary.

Six samples of ice cream were taken and examined at the Public Health Laboratory, General Hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne.

					Result	
					Grade 1	Grade 2
Ice Cream	..	..	..	..	5	1

**Food and Drugs Act, 1938. Section 38.—Sale of Horse Flesh.**

There are no premises dealing in this commodity.

**Food and Drugs Act, 1938. Section 13.**

Further hot water heaters were provided in shops during the year and generally the position is very satisfactory. Employees of food shops were instructed from time to time in the care needed in the handling and preparing of food. Posters and literature were also supplied.

Extensions to the West Wylam and Prudhoe Co-op. Society Ltd's. Shop at West Wylam were commenced.

**Food and Drugs Act, 1938. Section 14.—Registration of Premises.**

There are 36 premises registered under this section. In regard to ice cream, there are only two premises retailing unpacked ice cream and all the others are selling direct from refrigerators.

Examination of itinerant vans selling ice cream has been done from time to time.

**Food and Drugs Act, 1938. Section 57—Licensing of Slaughter Houses and Knackers' Yards.**

There are three licences in force but no actual slaughtering took place in these premises during the year.

**Snack Bars.**

These premises have been visited regularly.

**Food and Drugs Act, 1938. Section 13.**

**Public Health Act, 1936. Section 89.**

Public Houses—9 and Clubs—4.

During the year a large club was under construction to replace one which was not up to requirements.

Complete new toilets have been provided at Halfway House Inn which are a great improvement on the conditions existing beforehand.

**Travelling Vans and Shops.**

These are quite a feature of the district, selling commodities on the housing estates which are some distance from the shops.

The vans, etc., have been found to be satisfactory.

**Inspection and Control of Milk Supplies.**

In this district raw milk can still be sold but the bulk of the retail trade sells Pasteurised, Tuberculin Tested and Sterilised Milk.

The distribution of milk still requires improved types of vehicles as from time to time various open vehicles and carts are used in delivery, which give no protection from dust, rain or sun.

Eight samples of milk were examined at the Public Health Laboratory and found to be satisfactory.

**Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949 and 1950.**

Number of licences—11.

**Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949 and 1950.**

Number of licences to retail Pasteurised—11.

Number of licences to retail Sterilised—11.

**Dairies.**

There are three on the register.

**Public Health Act, 1936. Section 269—Tents, Vans and Sheds.**

There is one licence in force.

**Stables, Manure Pits and Piggeries.**

There is one large stable with several horses and a number of premises where pigs are kept.

These have been kept under observation and anything requiring attention attended to.

**Disinfection of Premises.**

Disinfection has been done as required.

**Disinfestation of Premises.**

Several kinds of household pests have been dealt with during the year, various powders and liquids being used.

**Places of Public Entertainment. Circular 120, Ministry of Health.**

Two cinemas in Prudhoe and one at Mickley. All are provided with adequate sanitation and are satisfactory.

**Pollution of the Atmosphere. Public Health Act, 1936. Section 101. Smoke Nuisances.**

There are only a small number of factory chimneys in the district, I.C.I. Factory at Low Prudhoe, Stocksfield and District Laundry, Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital, West Wylam Colliery and Eltringham Pipe Works. The chief offender has been the Stocksfield and District Laundry, South Road, Prudhoe, which is situated in a residential part. Efforts have been made by the owner to keep the smoke to a minimum.

Chalk haulage from the I.C.I. Factory has caused certain difficulties at times during the year. Wagons, with very few exceptions, have been sheeted up but still due to the lightness of the product carried, certain spillage has taken place. However, on the whole the position has improved from previous years.

**Burning Spoil Bank, West Wylam Colliery.**

This spoil bank was still burning at the end of the year, but it was anticipated that the bank would be completely burnt out during 1955. Water was being sprayed on to one new spoil bank.

**Offensive Trades. Public Health Act, 1936. Section 107. Restriction on establishment of offensive trade in Urban District.**

There are no offensive trades in this area.

**Housing Acts.**

A considerable amount of general repair work has been done during the year. Continuous work on colliery properties in Mickley and West Wylam is necessary to maintain the houses for a few further years until clearance orders can be put into effect.

The following table gives a list of various repair work which has been done after direction from the Health Department :—

Dampness abated .. .. .	30
Walls and ceiling plaster renewed or repaired ..	12
Roofs repaired or renewed .. .. .	20
External walls repointed .. .. .	15
Eaves gutters renewed or repaired .. .. .	37
Floors renewed or repaired .. .. .	15
Doors renewed or repaired .. .. .	9
Window frames renewed or repaired .. .. .	7
W.C's. renewed, repaired or provided .. .. .	26
Water pipes repaired .. .. .	7
Yard surfaces renewed .. .. .	12
Fireplaces renewed or repaired .. .. .	4
Chimney stacks rebuilt or repaired .. .. .	28
Drains cleared .. .. .	65
Dustbins renewed and additional .. .. .	77
Additional W.C's. provided .. .. .	5
Food stores provided or repaired .. .. .	10
Accumulations removed .. .. .	11
Scullery sinks provided .. .. .	7
Old gullies replaced .. .. .	12
Additional gullies provided .. .. .	15
Drains repaired or reconstructed .. .. .	19
New drains constructed .. .. .	15
Hot water supplies to dwelling houses .. .. .	26
Baths provided .. .. .	17
Coal houses repaired .. .. .	16
Staircases repaired .. .. .	5
Privies and Privy ashpits abolished .. .. .	21
Privies repaired .. .. .	23
Internal water supplies provided .. .. .	4



### RODENT CONTROL, PESTS ACT, 1949.

All complaints made to the Health Department were immediately investigated and suitable action taken. If structural repairs were required these were asked for, and a wide range of poisons were used in the eradication of rats and mice. Sewers again received treatment and appear to be completely clear of rats.

	TYPE OF PROPERTY				
	(1) Local Authority	Non-Agricultural		(4) Total of Cols. (1) (2) & (3)	(5) Agri- cultural
		(2) Dwelling Houses (inc. Council Houses)	(3) All other (including Business Premises)		
1. Number of properties in Local Authority's Dist.	12	2,740	84	2,836	27
2. Number of properties inspected as a result of :—					
(a) Notification .. .. .	—	42	11	53	—
(b) Survey under the Act	12	76	16	104	17
(c) Otherwise ( <i>e.g.</i> , when visited primarily for some other purpose)	—	81	13	94	7
3. Total inspections carried out including re-inspections .. .. .	26	218	42	286	24
4. Number of properties inspected (in Sect. 2) which were found to be infested by :—					
(a) Rats   Major .. .. .	1	—	—	1	—
Minor .. .. .	5	26	2	33	—
(b) Mice   Major .. .. .	1	—	—	1	—
Minor .. .. .	3	18	—	21	—
5. Number of infested properties (in Sect. 4) treated by the L.A. .. .. .	10	44	2	56	—
6. Total treatments carried out including re-treatments .. .. .	14	57	2	73	—

**HOUSING.**

NEW HOUSES COMPLETED DURING THE YEAR		With State Assistance	Unaided	Total
(a)	By Local Authority .. ..	—	—	—
(b)	By any other Housing Authority .. ..	—	—	—
(c)	By private persons ..	—	18	18

Total number of inhabited houses in district .. 2,740.

**1.—CLOSING AND DEMOLITION OF HOUSES.****A. Formal Action.**

- (1) Number of houses demolished during 1954 as a result of Clearance Schemes or other formal action .. .. —  
 (Number of houses included in above which were from pre-war confirmed Clearance Areas .. .. —  
 (2) Number of houses **closed** but not demolished as a result of formal action .. .. .. 4

**B. Informal Action.**

- (1) Number of houses permanently discontinued as dwellings as a result of informal action and not included above .. .. .. 4

**2.—RECONDITIONING AND REPAIR.**

Number of houses made fit during 1954 by procedure under either Housing or Public Health Acts :—

- (a) As a result of informal action .. .. 187  
 (b) By owners as a result of statutory notice .. .. 4  
 (c) By Local Authority in default of owners .. .. —

**3.—IMPROVEMENT GRANTS : HOUSING ACT, 1949.**

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
|  | Number of<br>separate<br>houses |
| (a) Applications submitted to Local Authority during year .. ..                        | 6                               |
| (b) Applications rejected by Local Authority ..  | 6                               |
| (c) Applications forwarded to Ministry .. ..   | —                               |
| (d) Applications rejected by Ministry .. ..  | —                               |
| (e) Applications approved .. ..  | —                               |
| (f) Total number of applications approved in your area since inception of scheme .. .. | 2                               |

**BYE-LAWS IN FORCE IN THE DISTRICT.**

- 9th October, 1950. Model Byelaws, Series (1), Ministry of Food.  
 Section 15, Food and Drugs Act, 1938.  
 For securing cleanly conditions and practices in connection with the handling, wrapping and delivery of food and sale of food in the open air.  
 31st December, 1953. Model Byelaws (Buildings).

**Conclusion.**

I have to report a steady year of progress and in concluding this report, I wish to thank Miss J. Gray, Shorthand-Typist, for her assistance and the very efficient manner in which she has carried out her duties.

Yours faithfully,

W. G. TWEDDLE,

*Public Health Inspector.*



